

**Minutes of Meeting of Bletsoe Parish Council held on Monday 2 September 2013 at the Village Hall, Memorial Lane, Bletsoe**

**Present:**

Cllrs Ann Gibbons (Chairman), Edward Bean, Paul Caves, Matt Cox, Debbie Hall, Alison Field-Foster, Mary Laws and the Clerk were in attendance. There were no members of the public.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

None

**2. Declarations of interest**

All members declared an interest in matters relating to the Waiting to the Sun planning application item however dispensations have been granted to all members who therefore have the right to speak and vote on this item.

**3. To approve the minutes of previous meeting held on 1 July 2013**

**It was resolved** to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

Clerk

**4. Matters arising from minutes**

Bourne End crossroads – Cllr Caves reported that he had visited the crossroads and noted the current signage is obscured in the hedge line. He proposed that 2 new signs should be installed and this could be a relatively inexpensive solution to resolve the problems experienced by drivers using the crossroads.

Chairman

Cllr Laws joined the meeting.

Cllr Gibbons said she intends to carry out a traffic audit for vehicles at the top and bottom of Coplowe Lane and to ascertain which direction vehicles are travelling in when they leave the Lane. Members discussed the Community Speedwatch scheme and whether this might be something the parish could consider in future? **It was resolved** that the Clerk would find out about the scheme and include as an agenda item at the next meeting.

Clerk

The Clerk reported that the land registry search had not provided sufficient information regarding ownership of the pathway adjacent to the Orchard. She was awaiting further information and would distribute this information once it became available to all members of the council.

Clerk

**5. Public Open Session**

There were no questions from the public.

**6. To receive an update regarding the Gypsy & Traveller site planning appeal**

Cllr Field-Foster gave a verbal report and updated members of the council regarding the planning application for the Fairhill site which will be heard by the Borough’s Planning committee on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

It was reported that Anglian Water have completed the upgrade to cover all tanks. This should ensure no odour is produced or affecting the site at Meadow Lane. This has been one of the “delays” in getting Meadow Lane developed despite this being the preferred G&T site by Bedford Borough

Council. Members hope that work will now commence at Meadow Lane without further delay.

The Secretary of State has recovered the application for the Bletsoe G&T site. This is extremely good news as it means that the Planning Inspectors report (produced after the appeal in September) will go the Secretary of State who will make the final decision.

Chairman

Members discussed how much had been spent already in legal fees and whether they should do a further round of fund raising. **It was resolved** to ask residents if they would make a donation towards the legal fees for the gypsy and traveller site appeal.

7. **To receive an update regarding the Neighbourhood Development Plan**

Cllr Caves gave a verbal report on progress with the NDP. He outlined that it was difficult to ascertain what type of businesses were already operating out of the airfield site. It was important to pursue the joint plan to ensure Bletsoe PC are able to comment on the type of developments for this area.

The Bletsoe Plan is ongoing and members of the group have concluded that the only land left in the village which could be developed was the Village Field. This land is owned by the Parish Council and therefore affords the parish protection from development. Members also discussed that the far end of the parish towards the A6 (off the Avenue) could potentially be developed if the village envelope was extended. The Bletsoe NDP group are compiling a questionnaire which they intend to distribute to all residents by the end of this year. The next meeting of the Joint NDP group was at the end of October.

8 **Correspondence – School Transport Consultation revised provision for students with SEN**

Details of the revised policy had been circulated to all members. **It was resolved** to make no comment.

9 **Planning – to note the report and comment on any new planning applications received**

The report was noted and **it was resolved** not to comment on the application for the Falcon Public House.

In addition it was reported that part of one of the properties (on the Riseley Road referred to as North End cottages) had been converted and being used for living accommodation. **It was resolved** to report the matter to the planning enforcement team at Bedford Borough Council.

Clerk

13 **Financial Matters**

(i) **to approve the accounts for payment**

**It was resolved:** to approve the accounts for payment. In addition **it was resolved** to pay DLP Consultants £1260 (Cllr Field-Foster abstained from this decision). This fee was an additional £260 over the agreed contribution towards the Fairhill planning application fees (agreed July 2013) although it was noted that the council would be able to recover VAT due on this

amount of £210.

Ch No	Payee	£	Description
1236	CPRE	29.00	Membership fee
1237	Eon UK	71.82	Street lighting maintenance
1238	Anglian Water	14.99	Water bill
1239	BDO LLP	120.00	External Audit fee
1240	Chris Horne Gardens Ltd	777.60	Grass cutting
1241	A Southern	94.58	Working from home allowance and Land Registry search fees
1242	P Vine	43.99	Paint for water hydrants
1243	DLP Consultants	1260.00	Planning application fees
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2411.98</b>	

Clerk

**(ii) To note the annual spend against budget**

The annual spend against budget was noted.

- (iii) To note the completion of the Annual Return for 2012/13 and any recommendations arising from this.

The external auditors had completed the Audit for 2012/13 and noted the council had not adopted a risk assessment policy. It recommended the council rectify this with immediate effect. The Clerk had already raised this matter with members of the council and this item is dealt with under item 11.

Clerk

- (iv) To note the 2013-14 pay settlement approved by NALC and to instruct Bedford Borough Council to revise the Clerk's salary accordingly.

**It was resolved** to approve the revised salary scales and the chairman would write to Bedford Borough Council informing them of the changes to the Clerk's salary which should be backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013.

Chairman

**11 To consider the draft Risk Assessment policy**

Members considered the draft policy and proposed two minor amendments:

- (i) War memorial inspected annually not monthly
- (ii) Contracts awarded (ie grass cutting) should be reviewed every 3 years not five years

**It was resolved** to adopt the revised risk assessment policy with immediate effect.

Clerk

**12 To note the calendar of meetings for 2014**

The parish council will now meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month in the following months:

January, March, May, July, September and November. These new dates have been confirmed with the village hall bookings officer.

13 **To note the Clerk’s report**

The report was noted – there was no requirement to transfer funds into the reserves to fund additional legal fees as this item had already been discussed under item 6 and residents would be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the legal costs for the G&T planning appeal in September.

14 **Parish Concerns**

Broken window – Bus Shelter – **it was resolved** to remove the window but not to replace as the shelter was no longer in use.

Cllr Debbie Hall informed members that she had reluctantly decided to resign and that this would be her last parish council meeting. The chairman thanked Debbie for all her hard work on behalf of the parish and accepted her resignation. The Clerk would inform Bedford Borough Council of the vacancy.

Clerk

Notice boards at Bourne End do not appear to be updated. Cllr Gibbons currently updates the notice boards but did not have a key for these boards. She would ask Mr Rowland if he had still had the keys and if not the Clerk would order replacement keys from Metro Signs.

Chairman  
Clerk

Green cabinet Sharnbrook crossroads – still needs re-coating with anti graffiti paint – Cllr Bean would arrange

Cllr Bean

Fly tipping Coplowe Lane – this needs reporting to Bedford Borough Council

Bus Services – it was reported that Grant Palmer had been awarded the contract to provide services to Bletsoe. There were still issues relating to the revised service primarily the timings were not suitable for school children at the beginning and end of the school day. Representatives from Riseley, Thurleigh, Cllr Bean and Cllr Clifton were meeting with Officer’s at the Borough regarding this issue.

Cllr Bean  
Cllr Clifton

Bus Stop on A6 – **it was resolved** that a sign be placed inside the bus stop stating that this stop was not operational as some members of the public were unaware that the stop was no longer in operation.

Clerk

Parish Council archives had now been moved from Mr Rowlands house to the church. This was an ongoing project and volunteers were required to sort through the paperwork to ensure that any items of historical importance are retained. Some items could be retained by the Borough archives department but there was no obligation on their behalf to store information unless it was deemed to be of historical importance (old minute books for example). Cllr Field-Foster offered to assist the Chairman and Cllr Bean with this task.

Chairman  
Cllr Field-Foster  
Cllr Bean

15 **Date of Next Meeting** – Monday 4 November 2013 at 7.30pm

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Approved by Chairman 4 November 2013